



# Interim Forest Management Plan

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## Property Identifiers

**Property Names and Designation:** Menard Island Resource Area/State Owned Islands, Spirit River Habitat Area

**Combined Acreage:** 2935

**Forestry Property Code(s):** 3503/3525/3599(compartment 2)

**Master Plan Date:** No plan on file. Anticipated development of Master Plan - 2020-2024

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## Part 1: Property Assessment

### General Property Description

The Menard Island Resource Area and State Owned Islands group is located in the Northern Highland Ecological Landscape, while the Spirit River property to the west is part of the North Central Forest. These properties are found within the following Landtype Associations: 212Xb01 Northern Highland Outwash and 212Xa03 Chequamegon Washed Till and Outwash Plains. The North Central Forest contains the best large-scale interior forest management opportunities in the state. This Landscape also offers excellent opportunities to manage areas for older forest within a context of outstanding aquatic features, intact and relatively undisturbed wetlands and vast public landholdings. Working forests could include areas with extended rotations, the development of old-growth forest characteristics and/or stands of "managed old-growth." The Northern Highland is especially rich in rare species. There are major opportunities to protect aquatic ecosystems, including one of North America's highest concentrations of glacial lakes, some of which are rare lake types. Lakes connected by perennial streams are common here and support a diverse aquatic fauna which includes rare and uncommon species. Protecting undeveloped lakes, restoring disturbed shorelines and protecting the integrity of lake-stream complexes are all extremely important management opportunities. Maintaining forest cover around and between lakes and streams is also needed to maintain high water quality and provide habitat for numerous species.

Most of this property group was established in 1999 as part of the Great Addition Purchase. About 7.5 miles of the Wisconsin River corridor was protected as part of this acquisition. In addition to hunting and fishing, other compatible uses such as canoeing and kayaking are popular.

### Site Specifics

- Current forest types, age classes and successional stages
  - Aspen – A total of 1985 acres (68%) is typed as aspen. An estimated 384 acres are in the 0-25 age class, and 1071 acres in the 26 to 50 class. Most of the remaining 530 acres is beyond 50 years of age and is part of the buffer along the Wisconsin River.



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- Northern Hardwoods - A total of 59 acres (2%) is typed as northern hardwoods.
- Oak – A total of 110 acres (4%) of oak can be found in the property group.
- Pine – White, red, and jack pine comprise about 205 acres (7%) within the group.
- State Natural Area designations - There are no State Natural Areas within this property group.
- High Value Conservation Forests (HVCF) or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape – None documented.
- Biotic Inventory – Not completed.
- Deferral/consultation area designations – No final or draft sites.
- Rare species – Rare species found within the property group include one species of bat (THR), one reptile (THR), and a raptor (SC). In addition, one small mammal listed as SC/N (special concern, no laws regarding use, possession, or harvesting) by the State of Wisconsin has been documented in the one-mile buffer.
- Invasive species – No invasive species have been documented within the property group.
- Soils – Underlying the Spirit River property soils are predominantly well drained sandy loam over acid loamy sand debris, flow, or outwash. Menard Island soils are predominantly well drained sandy loam over outwash.

## Archeological and Cultural Resources

The Lincoln County Archeological and Cultural Sites map (WDNR, 2012) indicates the presence of archaeological sites on the Menard Island Resource Area. Several Native American prehistoric campsites were listed on the north side of the Wisconsin river.

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## Part 2: IFMP Components

### Management Objectives:

- Aspen  
The primary objective is to regenerate this type to the extent possible for the benefit of game and nongame wildlife. Additional objectives include increasing age class diversity, expanding aspen acreage where opportunities exist, leaving selected reserve trees, and in general, promoting biodiversity.
- Northern Hardwoods  
The primary objective for this type is to maintain and/or regenerate stands to enhance wildlife values, with timber production as a secondary objective. Depending on quality and species composition, objectives may include uneven-age and even-age management.
- Oak



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The management objective for the oak stands is long-term maintenance with emphasis on regeneration.

- Pine
  - Pine plantations will be thinned to encourage succession to a more diverse mix of pine and other species. Red and white pine components will be maintained throughout the property group. Jack pine will be maintained over the long-term at varying percentages across the landscape, depending on site conditions.
- Other Objectives
  - Increase coarse woody debris, preserve den/cavity trees, and promote green-tree retention as appropriate.

## Property Prescriptions

- Aspen
  - Aspen will be harvested using the coppice method. To further enhance this type for wildlife large stands will be divided into smaller units and sales staggered over time to diversify age classes. As appropriate, snags, especially high value cavity and den trees, important mast trees, and selected conifers, especially supercanopy red and white pine suitable for eagle nests will be marked for retention. Non-merchantable trees 1" or greater in diameter may be felled to reduce crown closure to less than 20%.
- Northern Hardwoods
  - Where uneven-age management is appropriate, selection harvests will be designed to improve stand quality by removing poor quality trees and releasing crop trees. Canopy gaps will be included to enhance regeneration of other species and to enhance shrub and ground layer communities to benefit wildlife. In the case of very poor quality stands with less than 40 potential crop trees per acre, shelterwood harvesting may be utilized for regeneration. Snags, conifers, and other trees that have special value to wildlife will be retained.
- Oak
  - Oak stands will be thinned to increase volume, improve quality, and maintain this important type. At rotation age a shelterwood harvest will be used to regenerate the stand. Rotation age may be extended if quality and vigor of the type will allow.
- Pine
  - Pine plantations will be managed using intermediate selection thinnings to increase diameter until rotation age or extended rotation age. Succession to more diverse stands with enhanced values to wildlife over the long-term will be encouraged. Jack pine will be managed using even-aged techniques, with consideration given to the use of fire and direct seeding to complement other regeneration efforts.